



CIRCULAR OF HIS LORDSHIP
BISHOP LYNCH TO THE REV.
CLERGY OF THE DIOCESE OF
TORONTO.

ST. MICHAEL'S PALACE, }
Toronto, April 3, 1868, }

REV. AND DEAR SIR,—

In compliance with the laws of the Church, the regular Triennial Council of the Bishops of the Ecclesiastical Province of Quebec, in Canada, has been convoked by the Most Rev. Archbishop of Quebec, to meet in his Metropolitan Cathedral on the Seventh of May next, the Feast of St. Stanislaus, Bishop and Martyr. The object of Provincial Councils is, not to define the doctrines of the Church, but to maintain its discipline; to correct abuses, if any should have crept in; to provide for the always-increasing spiritual wants of the people entrusted to their pastoral care; and to extend the blessings of the Gospel to those "who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death;" of enacting laws binding in conscience Christian people. In the true Church alone does this authority exist, and it comes from Christ, the Head of the Church, and resides in the true Bishops of the Catholic Church, successors of the Apostles. "Take heed to yourselves, and to the whole flock, wherein the Holy Ghost hath placed you Bishops to rule the Church of God, which he hath purchased with His blood." (Acts xx. 28.) The obligations of the Faithful to obey these laws is evident from the words of St. Paul, "Obey your Prelates, and be subject to them; for they watch as being to render an account of yourselves, that they may do this with joy and not with grief. (Heb. xiii. 17.) Councils of Bishops have been always held in the Church on the model of

Am 17.) Councils of Bishops have been always held in the Church on the model of that held in Jerusalem by the Apostles to settle matters of discipline, (Acts xv,) and of that when Matthias was chosen to succeed to the Episcopacy forfeited by the unhappy Judas. (Acts i.) Our Lord Jesus Christ has promised that where two or three would be gathered together in His name, He would be there in the midst of them. (Matt. xviii) Now, may we not with confidence expect that Christ, who promised also to be always with His Church, will be in the midst of His Bishops, praying and consulting together for the extension of His Kingdom on Earth? More than all others, the Faithful are interested that the Holy Spirit preside over and direct these solemn assemblies; consequently they ought to pray with fervor and constancy to obtain this favor from the Father of Lights, from whom cometh every good and excellent gift. (St. James i.) You will, then, Rev. and Dear Sir, engage your parishioners to acquit themselves faithfully of this important duty of prayer. From the receipt of this present letter until the end of the Council, you will please to add to the other collects at Mass the prayer *de Spiritu Sancto*. In Parish Churches and Religious Communities the Litany of the Blessed Virgin will be recited, after Mass, with the people, that She, through whom we have received Him who redeemed us, may obtain for us from her Divine Son, the grace to sanctify us.

Yours faithfully in Christ,

† JOHN JOSEPH LYNCH,
Bp. of Toronto.